



Deer Management Assistance Program Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

May 9, 2018

MacKenzie Center, Poyette Wisconsin

Committee Members Present: Jeremy Holtz (DNR), James Lanier (QDMA), Jake Walcisak (County Forest Association), Mark Rasmussen (DNR), Alex Weber (Pheasants Forever), Mike Spors (WTU), Bob Holsman (DNR), Brad Hutnik (DNR), Bob Nack (DNR), Darcy Kind (DNR), Ross Prior (Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association), Dave Peterson (WBH rep), Dan Goltz (DNR), Brendan Woodall (USFWS rep)

Committee Members Absent: Dan Eklund (USFS), Scott Bestul (WCC), Bill McCrary (WBH), Mike Pjevach (SCI), Tom Fisher (HRC), Al Lobner (WBHA), Travis Bartnick (GLIFWC), Steve Swenson (My WI Woods), RGS rep, Ralph Fritsch (WWF), WI Consulting Foresters Assoc. rep, Kurt Waterstradt (USFWS)

Public attendance: Doug Sidel (Conservation Congress), Steve Ninneman (Conservation Congress), Josh Benes (Golden Sands RC&D)

DNR staff attendance: Anna Brose, Curt Rollman, Matt Esser, Amanda McGraw, Diane Anderson (Forestry)

9:30 am – meeting called to order

DMAP year in review – Bob Nack, DMAP Coordinator

- Review of 2018 new enrollment numbers
 - o Big drop in enrollment in 2017 and 2018 at Level 1
 - o Have heard from Level 1 people: "What's in this for me?"
- Review of re-enrollment numbers
 - o About 60% of levels 2 and 3 reenrolled in 2017 and 2018
 - o Darcy: Recommendation to include implementation resources with cooperators' property management plans
- Review of acreage enrolled
 - o About 272,000 acres enrolled statewide
- DMAP mentored hunting/trapping program
 - o Alex W and Darcy K: Recommendation to explore collaboration opportunities with R3 program, grants and education materials through Keith Warnke (DNR)

2017 DMAP Meeting Review – Bob Nack, DMAP Coordinator

- Work with NRCS on management plans
 - o Bob has been meeting with NRCS staff to identify cost sharing programs for habitat management projects
 - o Recommendation to update DMAP management plan so that it would qualify for NRCS, USFWS grant and cost-sharing programs
 - o Progress on this has been slow due to difficulty securing programming time
- DMAP reduced-price antlerless tag sales

- Ross P: Concerned about property owners who are experiencing deer damage but have fewer than 160 acres and therefore do not qualify for DMAP tags at Level 2
 - New Forest Damage tags require that the land be opened up to public access. Ross says this is a deal breaker for many landowners who need damage tags
 - Jeremy H. and others: Allowing DMAP cooperators to circumvent the CDAC process by getting antlerless tags without public access to increase hunting opportunity would likely create more problems than it would solve.
- DMAP level acreage requirements
 - Committee discussed reducing the required acres from 160 to 40 in order to receive a site visit
 - Property owners at Level 1 could receive a quick property evaluation/check list rather than a full property management plan, as well as region-specific resources
 - Josh B: recommends keeping the incentive of a site visit for Levels 2 and 3 to encourage the formation of cooperatives
 - Diane A: Forestry program has built in the capacity to do site visits to 1,000,000 acres of property (not DMAP specific). Could be an opportunity to work together to get Level 1 landowners a forestry site visit for free without adding to wildlife biologists' workload
 - Bob H: Original acreage requirements were put in place to manage DNR time and resources, and factoring deer home range size
- Deer exclosures to be made available to cooperators
 - Committee consensus to purchase the extra materials needed to make exclosures 15x15' in order to place Forest Regeneration Modeling (FRM) plots in exclosures

DMAP on Public Land – Jake Walcisk, County Forest Association

- Jake W: public land managers are more likely to use deer damage tags than enrolling in DMAP, because damage tags are free and do not require a public meeting, and require less steps to be approved by the county
- Recommendations to improve DMAP for public lands
 - Jake W: Increase personal communication between hunters who are getting DMAP tags through GoWild and the landowner/manager of that property
 - Jake W: consider waiving the \$6 fee for DMAP tags on public lands
 - Need to clarify the requirements for county approval of DMAP tags on county forests
- Discussion about whether we need to change the structure of DMAP tags to fit situations where forest damage tags could already be used
 - Public perception of DMAP is higher than it is for forest damage program
 - DMAP is better set up to do education and outreach regarding deer browse effects and management than the forest/ag damage programs are

3-year DMAP survey results – Dr. Bob Holsman, DNR

- Overall very high satisfaction among DMAP participants, even higher in Levels 2 and 3
- Property visit is the highest-rated component of the program

- Cooperators had improved perceptions of the DNR after participating in DMAP
- Challenges include staff capacity limitations, recruitment of less supportive participants, and translating the goodwill towards DMAP to the deer hunting population at large

Establishing Landowner Cooperatives – Joshua Benes, Golden Sands RC&D

- Recommends keeping the incentive of a site visit for Levels 2 and 3 to encourage formation of cooperatives
- Recommends developing an option for DMAP cooperators to pay their portion of the fee individually (i.e. cost per acre enrolled)
- Recommends creating individual log ins to MyDMAP for cooperators

DMAP Research Project update – Amanda McGraw, DNR

- Halfway through a 3-year study on deer herd condition and habitat assessment
- DMAP cooperators that participate are collecting high quality scientific data
- Darcy K: recommends messaging this project to the public as a way to promote DMAP

DMAP Cooperator of the Year

- Unanimous vote on the award of the DMAP Cooperator of the Year award – Jim Ryf (Price County)

DMAP Outreach and Marketing – Bob Nack, DMAP Coordinator

- Recommendation to increase DMAP representation at trade shows and expos through partners
 - o Provide DMAP brochures and talking points to partner organizations
- Suggestion to advertise DMAP on GoWild
- Suggestion to advertise DMAP research project more
- Steve N: recommends increasing distance requirement for cooperating properties to 2 miles.
Josh B: Distance of 1 mile or more may exclude landowners in between the cooperating properties who might just be harder to reach out to.
- Darcy K: recommends advertising number of acres being actively managed by cooperators, highlight successful habitat projects, tell personal stories
- Committee recommends increasing outreach through partner organizations

3 pm - meeting adjourned